

Marlborough Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY265517
Inspection date	01 November 2007
Inspector	Carol Brown

Setting Address	Cranham Community Centre, Marlborough Gardens, Cranham, Essex, RM14 1SR
Telephone number	01708 220 941
E-mail	
Registered person	Marlborough Pre-School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Sessional care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Marlborough Pre-school is a privately owned pre-school playgroup owned by Eileen Beasley and Michele Grote. It opened in 1975 but has been under current management since 2003. It operates from rooms in Cranham Community Centre which is situated in a residential area of Cranham, Upminster in the London borough of Havering. A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The group is open each weekday from 09:15 to 11:45 during term time. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

There are currently 34 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these 26 children receive funding for nursery education. The pre-school mainly serves the local area. The group currently supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The pre-school employs nine staff, eight of these, including the managers hold appropriate early years qualifications to National Vocational Level 2 or 3. One member of staff is working toward a recognised early years qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean and hygienic environment, where they are beginning to understand the importance of being healthy. Themed activities develop children's understanding, for example, children were taken to the local baby clinic with their dolls and were shown how to weigh babies. This is further supported as the staff give explanations as to the importance of regular exercise and healthy eating to promote healthy bodies and develop strong bones to help them grow. Effective daily routines promote children's health and well being. Hand cleaning and toilet routines are effective in helping to prevent the spread of infection. Children have daily access to outdoor play and are gaining increasing confidence riding bikes, balancing and climbing.

Children are well protected as four staff hold current first aid certificates and have a sound knowledge of first aid techniques, this means that they are able to provide appropriate care and attention in the event of an accident. Parents are required to give written consent for emergency medical treatment, which means that children receive the optimum treatment according to their specific needs. The staff ensure that individual children's health needs are supported, as they seek support and advice from paediatric nursing teams. The staff are proactive in ensuring that the setting is adapted to enable all children to play safely. Children who are infectious are excluded from the setting to reduce the risk of cross infection.

Children are offered healthy, nutritious snacks, for example, fresh fruit and cereals. Themed activities further develop children's knowledge of healthy eating as they have grown carrots and sampled pumpkin. Parents are required to provide information about their child's dietary requirements to enable the staff to meet individual needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment. They are able to move around safely and independently, as a result of thorough risk assessments and the supervision of the staff. Children are beginning to understand the importance of safety issues, for example they are reminded not to run indoors. This encourages children to take responsibility for their own safety and the safety of others. The children are encouraged to tidy toys away before snack time or going outside and a small group of children observed sweeping up spilled sand were heard to say 'we have to sweep it up or we might fall over'. Resources and play equipment meet safety standards, are well organised and afford children easy access. Effective procedures ensure that children are safe on outings, for example, they beginning to understand road safety and stranger danger.

Security within the setting is good. There are systems in place to prevent unauthorised access to the pre-school. Visitors are required to sign the visitors' book and state the nature of their visit. Children and staff regularly practise emergency evacuation procedures. This helps children to become familiar with the routine in the event of an emergency. Fire exits are clearly labelled and free from obstruction. There are effective procedures in place for the safe arrival and collection of children; for example, daily registers reflect arrival and departures and children are only released into the care of a known adult.

Children are well-protected. This is because the staff have a good understanding of the physical and emotional signs, which could indicate child protection issues and the appropriate procedures to follow to record and report any concerns. The setting has a comprehensive child protection policy, which is displayed for parents.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and confident in the pre-school's welcoming environment, for example, they greet each other and the staff on arrival. Children who are new to the setting are supported by the staff and parents are encouraged to stay with their child to help them to settle. Activities and play materials offer children the opportunity to make their own choices about play and learning. Children have access to a varied and stimulating range of age appropriate activities and resources. This enables them to develop and practise their skills, explore, investigate and problem solve. These are well-presented and provide opportunities for the children to develop gross and fine motor skills, for example, riding bikes and cutting. The home corner and dressing up area provide children with the opportunity to express their imagination and were seen to be well-used and popular with the children, for example, children dressed in their favourite costumes and looked to one another and the staff for approval. Children can access a wide range of books, which cover a multitude of topics, however the bookcase is overstocked and children could not easily access all of the books. Children enjoy regular trips to the local park to collect leaves and discuss the changes in seasons.

The staff are following the new Early Years Foundation Stage framework to support all children's learning and development. Effective planning and monitoring by the staff ensure that children's individual needs are appropriately met. Parents are encouraged to be involved in their child's learning as the staff offer guidance and advice for activities in the home that are linked to themes within the pre-school. This is further supported as 'travelling bear' goes home with the children for weekends and parents are encouraged to provide details of bear's adventures to be shared with the group.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are eager to come into the pre-school and are interested to learn. They are beginning to form strong relationships with their peers and firm friendships are being formed as children actively seek out one another. Effective monitoring and evaluation systems ensure that children are learning at their own pace and are achieving their potential. Children's learning is supported through a wide range of age appropriate activities, which offer challenge and develop their interests. Children's thinking and problem solving skills are supported as the staff carefully use open ended questions.

Children are eager to come into the pre-school. They are beginning to form strong relationships with their peers and firm friendships are being formed as children actively seek out one another. Children's behaviour is generally good and are able to understand the difference between right and wrong. The use of the 'sunshine tree' wall chart and stickers reward children's achievements, for example, being kind to someone or listening attentively.

Children are confident speakers and listen attentively to stories and rhymes. They are able to re-tell familiar stories and predict the sequence of events in the story of Spots picnic. Staff use good questioning techniques to extend children's use of language and reinforce their learning, for example, they use open ended questions to encourage children to voice what might happen

next in a story. Words and numbers are used as labels. Children are beginning to recognise letters and the sounds they make as the staff introduce a new letter each week, songs and displays reinforce this. Children are inquisitive and question what is happening around them, for example, one child asked the inspector 'what are you doing', when given an explanation and asked if they would like to help write the story about the pre-school, the child replied 'no thank you I can't write yet'. There are a few examples of children writing or attempting to write their names on their pictures displayed, however this is not consistently applied and does not give children the opportunity to practise these skills.

Some children reliably count to 20 and recognise numerals up to 10. Activities provide opportunities for simple calculation, for example, computer games counting ducks in the bath. Older children can create patterns and repeated shapes and are beginning to use number and concepts in their language, for example, 'my sister is older than me she's seven'.

Children are beginning to understand the world around them and are able to explore and investigate. Themed activities develop children's understanding of the wider community as 'people who help us' are invited into the pre-school to talk to children about their roles in society. Children are learning about the beliefs and cultures of others through appropriate resources, planned activities and the celebration of festivals. Themed activities support children's knowledge in relation to the changes in seasons, for example, collecting fallen leaves and learning about animals that hibernate in the autumn.

Children move around freely, negotiating space with increasing confidence, for example, avoiding others when riding bikes. They are keen to develop their physical skills such as hopping, skipping and jumping during circle time activities. Children competently use a range of tools for construction and malleable materials including rollers and cutters. Additional resources such as hammer peg boards allow children to create their own designs.

Children are provided with opportunities to develop their imagination, for example, one child put on a puppet show making up a story about a king, a princess and the witch. Children eagerly participate in music and movement activities. Children explore, use their senses to experiment and express themselves, for example, 'This sand feels wet and cold'.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children come from various backgrounds, which helps them to recognise difference and similarity within society. Children are provided with a good range of resources and activities, which helps them to develop their knowledge and understanding of the wider community. For example, activities include the celebration of cultural festivals such as Eid and Diwali. Children are valued and respected as individuals.

The setting supports children who have English as an additional language through the use of visual prompts and gesture. The setting supports the inclusion of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and works closely with parents and relevant agencies to provide the appropriate care and learning environment. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children's behaviour is generally good and they are beginning to show care and consideration for one another. This is as a result of the staff giving clear and concise explanations to children as to the effect their behaviour is having on others, whilst taking into account their age, level

of understanding and maturity. Simple rules help children to understand what is expected of them and they are rewarded for positive behaviour.

Partnership with parents is good and they have access to the setting's policies and procedures. The staff actively seek parents' views about their child's interests and needs to enable appropriate care. Parents are given daily verbal feedback as to their child's progress and they are encouraged to be part of the parent rota. Children's progress is recorded by their key worker in individual journals, which are shared with parents on a regular basis. Several parents were interviewed and all expressed their satisfaction at the care provided, the enthusiasm of the staff and that any concerns, however minor are taken seriously and acted upon.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Marlborough Pre-school meets the needs of the children for whom it provides. Effective daily routines help children to feel secure. Parents are provided with information relating to the services provided and are given regular opportunities to discuss their child's progress. Policies and procedures are used effectively; this promotes children's welfare and contributes to the smooth running of the provision. The documentation required for the safe and effective running of the nursery is in place. Children's care and development is supported through the staff's commitment to on-going training, this includes the new Early Years Foundation stage and food hygiene. There are effective systems in place to keep children safe and enable them to make progress.

Leadership and Management is good. Both the manager and deputy lead by good example and utilise the strengths of individual staff members well by delegating different areas of responsibility. Regular team meetings and individual supervision supports staff development as areas of weakness are identified and further training and support is made available.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous inspection it was recommended that accident records included the nature of the injury and the action taken. Accident records are appropriately recorded and therefore protect children's welfare.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards. The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.
--

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.
--

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- review the organisation of the book area to allow children to access books easily

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- provide more opportunities for children to write their own names

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education* (HMI ref no 2599) which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk